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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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WAGNER, MURABITO & HAO LLP
Two N. Market st.
Third floor
San Jose, CA 95113

EXAMINER

LE, UYEN T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2171

DATE MAILED: 06/12/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/867,790

Applicant(s)

BOREHAM ET AL. 

Examiner

Uyen T Le

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2,3.



- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claims 10, 11 are objected to because of the following informalities: line 1, "the method" should be – the computer program product --. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention because it is not clear what applicant intend for "an entry" and "the scope of the role" to mean.

The art rejection of claim 18 is applied as best understood in light of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph discussed above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

3. Claims 1, 3, 8, 18, 19, 21, 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Hardy et al (US 6,073,242).

Regarding claim 1, the claimed directory server including at least one role defined as an entry grouping mechanism is met when Hardy shows a role-based authority server (see the abstract). A role is clearly uniquely defined by the distinguishing name of its defining entry since the server is an LDAP server (see column 4, lines 52-56).

Claim 3 corresponds to a method for claim 1, thus is rejected for the same reasons stated in claim 1 above.

Regarding claim 8, the claimed method merely reads on the fact that the method of Hardy verifies who has access to what based on role assigned to each distinguishing name in a directory server (see the abstract, column 4, lines 52-56).

Regarding claim 18, Hardy discloses a method of computing which roles an entry possesses including validating that the entry meets the criteria to possess a role and determining that the entry falls within the scope of the role when Hardy shows that the entry of A. Hardy in the directory is associated with a role of president (see column 13, line 62- column 14, line 6).

Regarding claim 19, the claimed method of determining all roles possessed by an entry in a directory system is met by the fact that the method of Hardy determines all roles possessed by an entry for example A. Hardy has the roles of employee and president (see column 18, lines 1-28). The claimed step of "examining a computed attribute associated with the entry for a list of values of the computed attribute" is met when the method of Hardy examines the role of an entry. The claimed step of "enumerating each value which is a distinguishing name representing a role possessed

by that entry” is met when the method of Hardy lists the roles of employee and president.

Regarding claim 21, the claimed method of obviating the need to examine all groups in a directory system in order to determine the roles possessed by an entry merely reads on the fact that the method of Hardy is role-based (see the abstract). The claimed step of “configuring the directory system to contain roles” and “returning a list of computed values of a computed attribute belonging to the entry whereby all the roles possessed by the entry are obtained” merely read on the fact that the method of Hardy returns the roles of employee and president for the name of A. Hardy (see column 18, lines 1-28).

Regarding claim 23, the claimed method of enumerating the membership of a desired role including the steps of “locating all roles that are in scope with an entry that possesses the desired role”, “iterating all roles that are in scope with an entry that possesses the desired role” and “adding to an attribute value set the distinguishing names of those entries that possess the desired role” merely read on the fact that all distinguished names of entries possessing a specific role in a directory are retrieved. The method of Hardy clearly operates in such manner since the method is role-based (see the abstract). The claimed “desired role” merely reads on a specific role for which enumeration of membership is desired. The claimed in-scope roles merely read on the fact that the method applies to an enterprise. Clearly all roles in the enterprise are “in scope” with the desired role since they all belong to the same enterprise as the desired role.

4. Claims 5-7, 9, 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Thornton et al (US 6,535,884).

Regarding claim 5, Thornton discloses a method for searching an entry in a directory server (see column 3, lines 29-58). The claimed steps of "receiving a request to enumerate role membership for a particular role" is met when Thornton shows that the method receives a query for one of the attributes of the respective role (see column 3, lines 57-58). The claimed steps of "comparing a plurality of entries stored in the directory server by checking a predetermined role attribute for the particular role" and "returning the result of the comparison" merely read on the fact that the method of Thornton retrieves all values of all attributes of a role upon receipt of a query.

Regarding claim 6, the claimed step of "assigning at least one role to a first entry in the directory server, said at least one role being an entry grouping mechanism defined by distinguishing name of its defining entry" has to be performed in the method of Thornton for the request to enumerate role membership for a particular role as claimed in claim 5 above.

Claims 7, 9 correspond respectively to a system and computer program product for the method of claim 6, thus is rejected for the same reasons stated in claim 6 above.

Regarding claim 12, Thornton discloses a method of providing a directory service that defines roles for directory members (see column 3, lines 29-58). The claimed step of "defining a directory search specification for a role based on user attribute information, where said role can be possessed by any set of members and in which

roles possessed by users are defined by the directory search specification” merely reads on the fact that the method of Thornton is role-based and allows searching by roles. A role can clearly be possessed by any set of members since a role is associated with zero, one or more data items (see the abstract).

5. Claims 15, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Schneck et al (US 6,192,362).

Regarding claim 15, Schneck discloses all the claimed subject matter (see the abstract, Figures 3-5). The claimed entry is met when Schnecks shows an LDAP directory. Clearly each entry has to have a defined computed attribute. The claimed step of “assigning a value to the computed attribute” merely reads on the fact that any attribute has to have a value. The claimed “whereby said entry is capable of being grouped with other entries that have the same or a similar value for the computed attribute” merely reads on the fact that any entry in an LDAP is capable of being grouped with other entries. Note that claim 15 does not require the grouping to be actually performed. The claimed step of “configuring the directory server software to perform search operation” merely reads on the fact that the system of Schnecks allows user to search the directory server. The directory server software has to be configured to perform the search as claimed. Note also that the claimed “thereby reducing complexity in a client program that accesses the directory server” merely refers to an alleged benefit of the system but does not show how the benefit is obtained through the

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way the system functions. Claim 15 in essence merely configures a directory server by defining attributes of entries and assigning values to those attributes.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 2, 4, 20, 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hardy et al (US 6,073,242).

Regarding claims 2, 4, 20, 22, although Hardy does not explicitly show that the computed attribute is nsRole, the claimed feature merely reads on the fact that any attribute has to have a name. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include any name to an attribute in the method and apparatus of Hardy.

Claims 10, 11, 13, 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thornton et al (US 6,535,884), in view of Bachmann et al (US 6,085,188) provided by the applicant.

Regarding claims 10, 13, although Thornton does not explicitly show providing a set of expressions and Boolean operations for use in a directory search, it is well known in the art as shown by Bachmann to do so (see column 5, lines 60-67). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the claimed feature

while implementing the computer program product and method of Thornton in order to facilitate the search operation.

Regarding claims 11, 14, the operands are clearly connected by AND, OR as shown by Bachmann (see column 5, lines 60-67).

7. Claims 16, 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schneck et al (US 6,192,362), in view of Bachmann et al (US 6,085,188) provided by the applicant.

Regarding claim 16, although Schneck does not explicitly show providing a set of expressions and Boolean operations for use in a directory search, it is well known in the art as shown by Bachmann to do so (see column 5, lines 60-67). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to include the claimed feature while implementing the method of Schneck in order to facilitate the search operation.

Regarding claim 17, the operands are clearly connected by AND, OR as shown by Bachmann (see column 5, lines 60-67).

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Schneider et al (US 6,408,336) teach distributed administration of access to information. Leisten et al (US 6,023,702) teach a method an apparatus for a process and project management computer system.

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9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Uyen T Le whose telephone number is 703-305-4134.

The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:00-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Safet Metjahic can be reached on 703-308-1436. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-746-7239 for regular communications and 703-746-7238 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-305-3900.



Uyen Le
June 9, 2003